

Message Text

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FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: FURTHER VIENNA MEETING OF EC-9

U.S. DELEGATION IS INFORMED THAT MBFR REPS OF EC-9 COUNTRIES AGAIN MET AT A LUNCHEON ON FEBRUARY 13 TO DISCUSS CURRENT ASPECTS OF MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. THE ITALIAN DELEGATION DISTRIBUTED PAPER BELOW CONCERNING A POSSIBLE FREEZE OF EUROPEAN FORCES BETWEEN PHASES I AND 2 AND TAKING A GENERALLY NEGATIVE POSITION ON THAT POSSIBILITY. USDEL RECEIVED TEXT UNOFFICIALLY FROM ANOTHER DELEGATION.

BEGIN TEXT:

OBSERVATION ON A POSSIBLE "FREEZE" OF NON-US FORCES IN THE INTERIM PERIOD BETWEEN PHASE I AGREEMENT AND PHASE II

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1. SUCH A SUGGESTION DOES RAISE MANY QUESTIONS.

FIRST OF ALL: TO WHAT FORCES WOULD THE "FREEZE" APPLY?

GROUND FORCES OR AIR FORCES AS WELL, BOTH TYPES OF FORCES INCLUDING NUCLEAR-CAPABLE-SYSTEMS?

2. IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT IF NON-US AIR AND NUCLEAR-CAPABLE FORCES WERE INCLUDED IN A "FREEZE" FOLLOWING PHASE I AGREEMENT, THIS WOULD REPRESENT A MAJOR AND PROBABLY IRRETRIEVABLE STEP TOWARDS INCLUDING SUCH EUROPEAN FORCES IN THE 2ND PHASE REDUCTIONS.

3. WERE THE "FREEZE" TO APPLY ONLY TO GROUND FORCES, IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND THAT IT WOULD HAVE IN ANY CASE TO BE APPLIED ON THE WESTERN SIDE TO THE FORCES REMAINING IN THE AREA AFTER 1ST PHASE REDUCTIONS TAKEN AS A WHOLE (INCLUDING U. S. FORCES) AND NOT TO INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS (EXCEPT OBVIOUSLY THAT THE U.S. COMPONENT WOULD BE COVERED BY THE "SUB-CEILING" ESTABLISHED UNDER PHASE I AGREEMENT). IT IS INDEED CLEAR THAT A "FREEZE" APPLIED TO THE TOTAL OF NON-US FORCES, IF TAKEN SEPARATELY FROM US FORCES, WOULD AUTOMATICALLY CREATE ON THE WESTERN SIDE TWO CEILINGS: ONE APPLYING TO NON-US FORCES AND THE OTHER TO US FORCES: THIS CONCEPT, ONCE ESTABLISHED, WOULD BE CLEARLY MAINTAINED IN PHASE-2 AGREEMENT, WITH THE CONSEQUENCE OF JEOPARDIZING COMPLETELY THE ATTAINMENT OF THE ALLIED OBJECTIVE OF ONE CEILING FOR OVERALL GROUND WESTERN FORCES.

IT WOULD SEEM INDEED THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INTERIM "FREEZE" RELATING TO NON-US FORCES, I.E. TO EUROPEAN FORCES, IN THE AREA, SHOULD BE EVALUATED WITH THE GREATEST CARE, IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY POSSIBLE IMPLICATION, HOWEVER INDIRECT, THAT THE "FREEZE" IS BEING APPLIED TO INDIVIDUAL "NATIONAL" FORCES.

4. IT WOULD SEEM HOWEVER THAT A "FREEZE" IN WHATEVER FORM WOULD NOT BE IN THE INTEREST OF FORWARDING THE ALLIED POSITION IN PHASE-2 NEGOTIATIONS AND COULD INDEED REPRESENT A MAJOR DRAWBACK FOR THE ALLIES. SUCH A "FREEZE" WOULD IN FACT EFFECTIVELY WEAKEN OUR POSITION AND MAKE IT PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE ANY ATTEMPT TO TRADE - IN THE SECOND PHASE - "FROZEN" NON-US FORCES AGAINST FURTHER SOVIET FORCES. IT SEEMS INDEED THAT THE ONLY POSSIBILITY TO EFFECT-

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IVELY PRESSURE THE SOVIETS - IN 2ND PHASE - TO FURTHER REDUCE THEIR FORCES AGAINST NON-US FORCES REDUCTIONS, WOULD BE THE PERSPECTIVE OF A POSSIBLE FUTURE INCREASE OF THE WESTERN EUROPEAN FORCES, AND OF THE BUNDESWEHR IN PARTICULAR (THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD NOT PROBABLY CONSIDER SUFFICIENT OR INDEED DESIRABLE TO "BALANCE" WITH A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN OTHER W.P. FORCES).

5. IN ADDITION, A "FREEZE" OF THE FORCES REMAINING IN THE AREA AFTER 1ST PHASE REDUCTIONS WOULD INDEED MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ATTAIN IN THE 2ND PHASE OUR OBJECTIVE OF A "COMMON CEILING". SUCH A FREEZE WOULD HAVE INDEED ALREADY ESTABLISHED TWO CEILINGS FOR THE TWO SIDES (CEILINGS RESULTING FROM THE SUBTRACTION OF WITHDRAWN U.S. AND SOVIET FORCES FROM THE TOTALS), AN HIGHER ONE FOR THE W.P. AND A LOWER ONE FOR NATO. SUCH A SITUATION WOULD HARDLY CONSTITUTE AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE SOVIETS TO COOPERATE IN THE 2ND PHASE TOWARDS THE GOAL OF A COMMON CEILING FOR BOTH SIDES.

6. IT MAY BE ARGUED THAT SUCH A "FREEZE" WOULD ONLY BE APPLY IN THE INTERIM PERIOD BETWEEN THE CONCLUSION OF PHASE 1 AND PHASE 2, AND THAT IT WOULD THEREFORE REPRESENT A COMMITMENT FOR A LIMITED (ALTHOUGH INDEFINITE) PERIOD OF TIME. WERE THE SOVIETS TO BLOCK OR DELAY NEGOTIATIONS TOWARDS THE AGREED OBJECTIVE OF A COMMON CEILING, THE ALLIES COULD ALWAYS CALL OFF THE NEGOTIATIONS AND TERMINATE THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE FREEZE. SUCH A COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE BUT HARDLY POLITICALLY CONCEIVABLE IN ANY FORSEEABLE FUTURE CIRCUMSTANCES. ONCE NON-FORCES WERE "FROZEN" IT WOULD ACTUALLY BE POLITICALLY EXTREMELY DIFFICULT BOTH FOR INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC REASONS TO DE-FREEZE THEM.

7. TO RENEWED QUESTIONS OF THE SOVIETS IN THIS MATTER, IT SHOULD BE ANSWERED, AT LEAST AT THIS STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, THAT THEY KNOW PERFECTLY WELL THAT THE GOVERNMENTS OF WESTERN EUROPE HAVE NO INTENTION WHATSOEVER TO INCREASE THEIR FORCES NOW OR LATER, AND THAT THIS WOULD INDEED BE INCONCEIVABLE PENDING NEGOTIATIONS ON REDUCTIONS TO AN AGREED COMMON CEILING, THE LEVEL OF WHICH COULD BE INDICATED ALREADY IN THE PHASE-1 AGREEMENT.

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8. IT WOULD NOT BE WISE TO MENTION THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE QUESTION OF THE LEVEL OF NON-US FORCES IN THE INTERIM PERIOD COULD BE COVERED WITHIN A "NON-CIRCUMVENTION" CLAUSE. INDEED THE MENTIONING OF A CLAUSE OF "NON-CIRCUMVENTION" IN THIS CONTEXT AND AT THIS TIME COULD HAVE INDESIRABLE IMPLICATIONS ON THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF SUCH A POSSIBLE CLAUSE TO BE ENTERED INTO THE AGREEMENT.

END TEXT.HUMES

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